



TAVISTOCK URBAN DISTRICT



# ANNUAL REPORT

*of the*

MEDICAL OFFICER

OF HEALTH

*for the*

Year Ended 31st December, 1960



## PUBLIC HEALTH AND HOUSING COMMITTEE.

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The following members of the Council served on the above Committee during the year:—

Chairman: Mrs. H. T. Gillies.

Vice-Chairman: Mr. W. A. Hayward.

### Members:

Mr. G. P. Clark.

Mr. E. H. Knape.

Mr. A. J. Mill.

Mr. H. Moore.

Mrs. D. L. H. Pinder.

Mr. F. G. Quant.

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## PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

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### *Medical Officer of Health:*

E. D. ALLEN-PRICE, M.D., Ch.B., D.P.H

### *Surveyor and Chief Public Health Inspector:*

R. J. CONNOLLY, M.I.P.H.E., C.R.S.I.

### *Additional Public Health Inspector and Meat Inspector:*

M. E. NORTHCOMBE, A.R.S.H., C.R.S.I.

(until October, 1960).

### *Assistant and Chief Clerk*

MISS P. B. FLETCHER

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to submit my annual report for the year ended 31st December, 1960 which has been prepared in accordance with instructions from the Ministry of Health.

The general health of the town remains good, and there was no epidemic of any kind.

Vital statistics for the year are set out in the accompanying tables:

SECTION "A".

GENERAL STATISTICS

Area (Statute acres) .....	2,098
Population — 1931 Census .....	5,130
Population — 1951 Census .....	5,889
Estimated home population — mid 1960	6,210
Number of inhabited houses .....	2,588
Rateable value .....	£91,779
Product of the Penny Rate .....	£363 3 2
Loan Debt .....	£641,571

VITAL STATISTICS

	Male	Female	Total
<b>Live Births</b> .....	30	45	75
Legitimate .....	28	44	---
Illegitimate .....	2	1	---
<b>Deaths</b> .....	53	58	111

England  
and Wales

Live Births.

Number .....	75	
Rate per 1,000 population .....	12.07	17.1
Corrected birth rate .....	13.9	
Illegitimate live birth per cent of total live births .....	4%	

Stillbirths.

Number .....	Nil	
Stillbirth rate per 1,000 total live and still births	—	19.7
Total live and stillbirths .....	75	

**Infant Mortality Rates.**

Infant deaths under one year .....	2	
Total infant deaths per 1,000 total live births	26·6	21·7
Legitimate infant deaths per 1,000 legitimate live births .....	27·7	
Illegitimate infant deaths per 1,000 illegitimate live births .....	Nil	
Neo-natal Mortality rate (deaths under 4 weeks per 1,000 total live births) .....	26·6	
Early Neo-natal Mortality rate (deaths under 1 week per 1,000 total live births) .....	26·6	
Perinatal Mortality rate (stillbirths and deaths under 1 week combined per 1,000 total live births) .....	26·6	

**Maternal Mortality (including abortion).**

Number of deaths .....	Nil
Rate per 1,000 total live and stillbirths .....	Nil

**Deaths.**

Crude death rate per 1,000 population .....	17·8	11·5
Corrected death rate .....	11·2	

Year	Population	Birth Rate	Death Rate
1956	6,190	14·4	16·5
1957	6,210	11·4	18·0
1958	6,180	10·3	16·3
1959	6,190	10·5	15·0
1960	6,210	12·7	17·8

**The chief causes of death were as follows:**

Cancer .....	20
Vascular diseases .....	23
Coronary diseases .....	16
Heart diseases .....	17
Other circulatory diseases .....	9
Pneumonia .....	10
Hyperplasia of the prostate .....	1
Congenital malformations .....	1
Accidental .....	1
Other ill-defined causes .....	13



## AGE AT DEATH TABLE

Age at Death:	Male	Female
Under 1 year .....	1	1
1 - 4 years .....	—	—
5 - 14 years .....	—	—
15 - 24 years .....	—	—
25 - 34 years .....	—	—
35 - 44 years .....	1	1
45 - 54 years .....	1	3
55 - 64 years .....	7	4
65 - 74 years .....	13	16
75 and over .....	30	32
Total ...	53	58

## SECTION "B".

### GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES.

The general provision of health services remain as in previous years.

#### **Welfare Foods.**

The W.V.S. continue to give most valuable assistance distributing these foods to the general public.

#### **Ambulance Service.**

The St. John Ambulance Brigade, under delegated powers from the Local County Health Authority, continued to give a highly satisfactory 24-hour cover for the whole district.

#### **Maternity Accommodation.**

During the year 262 babies were born in the Tavistock Maternity Home as follows:

Tavistock Urban District .....	55
Tavistock Rural District .....	122
Others .....	85

73% of the babies born in the Tavistock Urban District during the year were born in the Tavistock Maternity Home.

#### **Mass Radiography Service.**

Durnig May, 1960, the Mass Radiography Service visited Tavistock. The Council, using their power under the Public Health Act voted the sum of £25 to advertise this campaign, which materially assisted in its success. 1,491 persons over the age of 15 years took advantage of the service. Only one case requiring further treatment was uncovered.

Doctor Budding, the Assistant County Medical Officer has submitted the following report on her work during the year:

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The health of the children was remarkably good, with no serious epidemics despite the poor summer, and autumn weather. There were perhaps more colds than usual at the end of the autumn term.

The clothing and general cleanliness remains at a high level, and any falling below the standard is invariably due to ignorance or fecklessness and not lack of money. The one-time universal "liberty bodice" (both for little boys, and little girls) appears to be entering a decline. The reason for this is not apparent; it may be due to the parents listening more to advice (though I doubt it!), or more probably due to the fact that partial undressing for physical exercise is the rule, and also the large stores do not perhaps display these garments in as full view as was previously the case; at any rate; children of five years of age are much less over-clothed than they were even ten years ago, and the "quick knit" jerkin has gained a most useful place in the up-to-date wardrobe, with its advantage of easy removal when necessary.

School dinners continue to be of a high standard, and are obviously enjoyed by a high proportion of children—to good effect.

During the year there have been one or two items of particular interest, viz:—

#### **Canteen Workers.**

A number of these, employed largely on washing-up, in a large school canteen, were found to be suffering from Dermatitis. The detergent solution was found to be the cause, and a substitute soap solution being provided (at higher cost!), this apparently cleared up. An interesting point was that one or two of these women had consulted their own doctors, who had naturally prescribed local treatments, but not one had related the disease to occupation; as this was not elicited from the patients, with the result that there was no improvement until the cause was found and removed.

#### **Immunisation.**

These have been continued as before, but with the Poliomyelitis vaccine extended to 40 plus, The percentage acceptance rate remains high in this area.

#### **Tetanus.**

Immunisation is of course being carried out as a routine in most babies attending clinics. Education of parents is needed as full understanding of the prophylaxis is not understood. This I think is bound up with the lack of universal proof of Tetanus immunisation, e.g., tattooing. For example I feel that often parents do not realize that their children have had this protection, and fail to tell the hospital, in case of an accident, with the result that A.T. serum is given automatically which entirely defeats the object of the immunisation.

### **B.C.G. Against Tuberculosis.**

Vaccination was extended to all school population 13 plus and used with a reasonable response, i.e., a slightly higher number of acceptances than the previous year (80% acceptance).

### **Ophthalmic Service.**

The Ophthalmic service has broken down in this area—from being an excellent service for many years, it is now unreliable (due to lack of doctors), in that some Grammar School children under treatment have not been seen since 1958.

### **Hearing.**

The detection of deaf children has made a good start, but as yet is far from satisfactory in this area. Too many “authorities” are involved, and when eventually a hearing aid is obtained if required (usually a long wait), there appears to be little or no instruction in use and/or maintenance, and no follow-up. The result is that children are not always finding it easy to use their aids once obtained.

My final item is the new scheme for School Medical Inspections which started in this area in September 1960. At present I cannot give an adequate report, as the Autumn term was spent largely in explaining the scheme to teachers individually, and then working it into the existing arrangements, e.g., some schools had not had their annual inspections and therefore needed several sessions which meant that there was less time available to get round to each school. By May 1961 it should be working fairly smoothly. So far the general consensus of opinion among the health visitors and Head Teachers is that it is a good scheme.

Briefly it is this: Each child is seen as an entrant by the Assistant County Medical Officer, at whatever age he or she comes to the school. This is a full examination together with hearing and eye tests. Every three years, i.e., at 8, 11 and 14 years the parents, or Assistant County Medical Officer have the opportunity of asking for a child to have a medical examination, but this is not automatic. So far on one term's work there have been 25% chosen for these inspections. This leaves more time available for consultations, particularly of psychological problems, with parents and teachers (where as before they were squeezed into five minutes, and there was always a feeling of “rush” in parents' minds), time to really talk to teachers, and find out existing problems otherwise not mentioned, visits to each school regularly (e.g., termly instead of perhaps only once a year) and no overlapping appointments, and parents and children have no sense of hurry, and a peaceful examination, and talk to the parent can take place with no queue waiting outside for the “next in” order.

There have been some difficulties to overcome at first but I am convinced that eventually this is the answer for present-day medical inspections, particularly with its emphasis on mental health. One of our great problems for the next few years is the adolescent girl and boy.



They are maturing physically (e.g., 12 instead of 14 years) and not mentally earlier. This in itself is giving rise to some problems which we must be prepared in some way to face with the education authorities.

### **Smoking.**

A last word on the subject of smoking amongst school children. The problem was recently brought to light in my area by complaints of school children attending a senior school smoking on the school buses. Apparently a large proportion of both boys and girls were doing this (this has now been stopped), but a high percentage of smokers 11-15 years of age has been confirmed. A startling example of this problem is a 12-year-old girl noticed to have fingers stained with obvious heavy smoking. She admitted this, and further questioning determined the fact that her parents knew and raised no objection. She had been smoking regularly since ten years of age; at that time she smoked an average of ten cigarettes a day.

Clearly in this case the parents were to blame, as, apart from the smoking habit, the amount of pocket money was undoubtedly excessive.

Our problem is — much more propaganda.

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## **SECTION "C".**

### **SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES IN THE AREA.**

#### **Water Supply.**

Mr. Young, District Engineer to the North Devon Water Board has presented the following report for the year.

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Following the policy of eliminating small sources of supply, main-laying has commenced on the six inch high pressure main through the town to Whitchurch Down Reservoir.

This scheme will have the effect of making redundant the collecting area at Kilworthy, Down Road Booster Station and the pumping station at Wilminstone Quarry.

All supplies will be received from the Board's works at Prewley via Brentor Reservoir and will be chlorinated at source.

Installation of replacement and new services are being carried out and regular night detection teams are in operation.

Work is due to commence early in the coming year on mains renewals in Bannawell Street, Plymouth Road, Whitchurch Road and the six inch trunk main from Gulworthy to Tavistock.

Estate developments are being served by new mains extensions in stages, these include Abbotsfield, Deer Park and Westmoor Park.

Chemical analysis shows that the water is a high standard of organic quality with a hardness of about 60 p.p.m. and a pH value of 6.9. A slight deposit of iron is present.

**Sewage Disposal.**

Crowndale and Whitchurch works have continued to deal with a very large flow of sewage. Flow recordings have been taken regularly. Various infiltration points have been located and remedial work is proceeding.

The Consulting Engineers (Lemon and Blizzard, Plymouth) have continued their investigation into the whole sewage problem in the town—as regards the state of the sewers, the excessive infiltration of surface and spring water and the disposal works themselves. From the evidence to hand from these investigations, and the results of chemical analysis of the sewage effluent and the river water itself it is obvious that the town must be prepared for a very large capital outlay in order to comply with modern requirements and bring the system up to the standard required by recent legislation.

**Refuse Collection:**

Domestic and trade refuse collections have proceeded satisfactorily. Further tipping areas have been arranged.

**Swimming Bath.**

Pending the installation of the new circulation and hypochlorination system, the hand treatment was continued and gave satisfactory results.

The usual arrangements were made for the use of the bath by school children.

**Sanitary Inspection of the Area.**

In the table following the number of visits made in connection with routine work, in addition to work itemised in the various sections, are shown.

Drainage .....	73
Rodent Control .....	54
Housing applications .....	138
Housing management .....	1127
Sanitary defects and complaints .....	13
Pet Shops .....	4
Disinfection .....	2
Disinfestation .....	12
Sewage works and refuse tips .....	159
Special visits .....	390
Sampling .....	169

**Factories Acts 1937 to 1959.**

Tables showing the number of inspections made, cases in which defects were found, and the number of outworkers in the town, are set out in the Tables at the end of this report.

## Weather.

The total rainfall for the year was 60.55 inches.

	Rainfall	Average Temperature
January	5.33	40.8
February	4.91	40.5
March	2.29	45.5
April	3.66	51.5
May	2.78	55.2
June	2.11	59.9
July	6.14	58.0
August	4.72	57.8
September	6.96	55.5
October	7.79	51.0
November	8.22	48.6
December	5.64	39.6

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## SECTION "D".

### HOUSING

Four three-bedroomed type houses were completed during the year at Abbotsfield and were offered for sale. Four one bedroom flats and three bed-sitting flats were completed and occupied at King Street.

A total of 284 dwellings have been completed and occupied since building commenced in 1946.

According to the records 27 houses were erected by private enterprise and occupied during the year, in addition to the above figures.

There were 195 applicants for Council houses on the register at 31st December, 1960. Ninety of these applicants were resident outside the Urban area.

The following list indicates the different types of accommodation required by the applicants:

Single bedroom requirements .....	64 applicants
Two bedroom requirements .....	76 ..
Three bedroom requirements .....	51 ..
Four bedroom requirements .....	4 ..

On the 31st December, 1960 the Council controlled the following properties:

Four bedroom houses (all built prior to 1946) .....	4
Three bedroom houses (122 pre 1946 and 123 post 1946, less 49 sold to occupiers) .....	196
Two bedroom houses (24 pre 1946 and 89 post 1946, less 4 sold to occupiers) .....	109
Two bedroom Bungalows (all post 1946) .....	16
Two bedroom Maisonettes (all post 1946) .....	3
One bedroom Maisonettes (all post 1946) .....	34
One bedroom Flats (all post 1946) .....	16
Bed-sitting Flats (all post 1946) .....	3

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Total ... 381



## SECTION "E".

### INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

#### Milk.

Only one premises within the Urban area is registered by the Council under the Milk and Dairies Regulations 1949.

Monthly samples of milk were taken from retailers selling milk in the Urban Area, and the results obtained are summarised in the following table.

Type of Milk	Number of Samples	Passed	Failed
Pasteurised .....	31	29	2
T.T. ....	26	24	2

#### Other Food Premises.

Regular inspections were made during the year of the various food premises in the town. The number of food premises in the area, by type of business is:

Hotels, Public Houses and Inns .....	11
Canteens (in schools, clubs, hospitals and institutions) .....	20
Cafes, Restaurants and Snack Bars .....	14
Bed and Breakfast premises and Guest Houses .....	19
Butchers' shops and stalls .....	14
Bakeries (Baking own bread) .....	3
Fishmongers .....	2
Provision shops .....	34

The number of food premises registered under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act 1955, for the manufacture of sausages and preserved foods = 9, and for the sale of Ice Cream = 27.

A total of ten ice cream samples were taken during the year. The results were as follows.

Grade 1 .....	2
Grade 2 .....	8

No premises in the area is used for the manufacture of ice cream.

During the year 112 inspections of food premises were made and no formal action under the Act was taken.

Condemned foodstuffs are collected and disposed of on the Council's refuse tip, with the exception of meat and offal from the abattoir.

#### Meat Inspection.

Meat inspection has been fully carried out by your Inspectors at the abattoirs during the year. 16,211 carcasses were dealt with, being a decrease of 956 on the preceeding year's kill. Meat inspection involved 991 visits to abattoirs.

Fuller details of the number of animals killed and inspected, and the carcasses, parts or organs, condemned, are set out in the table at the end of this report.

#### Condemned Meat and Offals.

Condemned meat and offals were collected from the abattoir by approved contractors.



**Samples taken under Section 2, Food and Drugs Act, 1955.**

Gin.

Milk Chocolate.

Lard.

Fish Paste.

Advocat.

Buttered Cheese Spread.

Halibut Oil.

Golden Raising Flour.

Soluble Asprin Tablets.

Liquid Paraffin.

Wheatmeal Bread.

Vegetarian Luncheon Roll.

Fruit Chutney.

Oil of Eucalyptus.

Battermix.

Cheddar Cheese.

Meat Pudding.

Parrish's Chemical Food.

Ground Almonds.

Whisky.

Ginger Wine.



ALL GENUINE.

**Sponge slices with butter.**

Was found to be deficient in butter fat. A warning letter was sent.

Milk--25 samples.

**Food Poisoning.**

No case of food poisoning was notified during the year.

## SECTION "F".

### PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

During the year one case of Dysentery in a small boy aged five years, and one case of Haemophilus Influenzal Meningitis in a baby boy aged seven months were notified by the Medical Practitioners.

No case of infectious disease was notified by the school authorities.

#### **Tuberculosis.**

No deaths were recorded during the year from this cause. Four new cases were admitted to the Register, three pulmonary and one non-pulmonary in origin.

At the end of the year 46 cases remained on the Register as follows:

Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary.	
M.	F	M.	F.
19	17	5	5

In conclusion, I would thank the Chairman and Council for the ready hearing I have received at all times and the Public Health Staff and others who have materially assisted in the preparation of this report.

I am, Mr. Chairman and Councillors,

Your obedient servant,

E. D. ALLEN-PRICE,

Medical Officer of Health.

## CARCASSES AND OFFAL INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED IN WHOLE OR IN PART.

	<i>Cattle excluding Cows</i>	<i>Cows</i>	<i>Calves</i>	<i>Sheep and Lambs</i>	<i>Pigs</i>	<i>Horses</i>
Number killed (if known)	1778	132	326	6885	7090	—
Number Inspected	1778	132	326	6885	7090	—
All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci: Whole carcasses condemned	17	6	1	58	5	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was con- demned ..	383	42	1	293	94	—
Percentage of the number inspected affected with dis- ease other than tuberculosis and cysticerci ..	22.49%	36.36%	0.6%	5.09%	1.39%	—
Tuberculosis only: Whole carcasses condemned ...	1	1	—	—	2	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was con- demned ...	1	—	—	—	82	—
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	0.112%	0.757%	—	—	1.18%	—
Cysticercosis: Carcases of which some part or organ was con- demned ...	16	—	—	—	—	—
Carcases submitted to treatment by refrigeration	16	—	—	—	—	—
Generalised and totally condemned	—	—	—	—	—	—

# FACTORIES ACTS, 1937 to 1959.

## 1. INSPECTIONS FOR PURPOSES OF PROVISIONS AS TO HEALTH (including inspections made by Public Health Inspectors).

<i>Premises</i>	<i>Number on Register</i>	<i>Number of</i>		
		<i>Inspection</i>	<i>Written Notices</i>	<i>Occupiers Prosecuted</i>
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities ...	9	7	—	—
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the local Authorities ...	55	37	—	—
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authorities (excluding out-worker's premises)	4	20	—	—
TOTAL ...	68	64	—	—



2. CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND.

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of Cleanliness ...	—	—	—	—	—
Overcrowding	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable Temperature	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate Ventilation	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences :					
(a) Insufficient	—	—	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective	—	—	—	—	—
(c) Not separate for the sexes	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences (not including out-work)	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	—	—	—	—	—

3. OUTWORK (Sections 110 and 111).

<i>Nature of Work</i>	Section 110			Section 111		
	<i>No. of out-workers in August list required by Section 110 (1) c</i>	<i>No. of cases of default in sending lists to Council</i>	<i>No. of prosecutions for failure to supply lists</i>	<i>No. of instances of work in unwholesome premises</i>	<i>Notices served</i>	<i>Prosecutions</i>
<i>Wearing Apparel (Making, etc.)</i>	1	—	—	—	—	—



